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# Selected Speeches and News Releases

Nov. 19 - Nov. 25, 1992

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# Remarks

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U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

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**Prepared for delivery by Secretary of Agriculture, Edward Madigan, to the Agriculture Outlook Conference, Washington, D.C., December 1, 1992**

Good Morning, and welcome to this 69th United States Department of Agriculture Outlook Conference.

We are assembled here to talk about agriculture's changing horizon.

Change—now that's an interesting word that I have heard a great deal about recently.

The theme developed by the people who started planning this conference several months ago was "The new forces of change." I bought the idea. What they didn't tell me was the full extent of the changes they might have had in mind. I think the next Secretary of Agriculture should keep an eye on these people.

We're here to identify forces of change . . . assess those forces . . . and give some appraisal as to what we think is likely to happen in the future.

We will appreciate your participation in this process over the next two and one-half days.

In preparing to talk with you, I started by looking at the proceedings of the Agriculture Outlook Conference 10 years ago. I wanted to see how well that conference anticipated the changes ahead.

It was a good preview of the coming year, but do you know what I didn't find?

Farm exports in 1981 were a record-high. They were off some in 1982. But I didn't find anyone at the Outlook Conference in 1982 who predicted a huge drop in farm exports within four years. Had someone mentioned it, that person probably would have been booed off this stage. After all, two weeks before that Outlook Conference in 1982, one group had adopted a goal of "75 by 85." The goal was \$75 billion in agricultural trade by 1985.

In reality, a steep drop in our farm exports in the early '80s plunged American farmers into a deep and painful recession.

In those troubled years our No. 1 farm market—the domestic market—set records year after year. The nation enjoyed a prolonged period of strong economic growth. But farmers didn't. Let's never underestimate the importance of American farm exports on the health of our agricultural

economy. I can't recall a period of agricultural prosperity that was not accompanied by increasing agricultural exports.

Ten years ago this month, we were putting a record corn crop in the bin—yields were at an all-time high. Nobody at that 1982 conference predicted that corn yields the next year would take the steepest plunge since 1901. And the 1983 drop was surpassed by a bigger drop in 1988. Never underestimate the ability of the weather to upset the best laid plans.

In 1982 we were recovering from double-digit inflation in each of the three previous years. Nothing saps the vitality of the economy, and steals from people, and undermines society, like unbridled inflation. We tamed inflation, but I didn't find anyone who predicted that by 1992 the inflation rate would be only about 3 percent.

Ten years ago interest rates on CCC crop loans were 9-3/4 percent, down 7 points from the year before. Nobody predicted that by last month these interest rates would be 3-1/8 percent, the lowest in 30 years.

You may recall that 1982 farm land prices were record high. I didn't find anyone who was predicting that land prices 5 years later would be down more than one-fourth.

Farmers had borrowed to try to keep up with inflationary costs, and they had borrowed against an anticipation that didn't materialize; and lenders had led the way. Let's never understate the importance of risk management.

Farm debts were peaking in 1982, following a huge runup in farm debts in the preceding five years. The farm debt increase alone in those five years exceeded total farm debts just a short while earlier. But nobody predicted 10 years ago what was about to happen to over-extended farmers. And nobody predicted that even the farmer-owned, independent, strong Farm Credit System would within the next five years be leaning on the government for help.

But neither did anyone suggest that over the next several years farmers would work off \$60 billion of their 1982 debts and reverse the 30-year trend of debt buildup.

We came to the aid of farmers. USDA spent more than \$100 billion on farm price support programs in a half dozen years from 1982 to 1987. That was more than had been spent on price supports in the previous 50 years, going back to the beginning of farm price support activities in the Great Depression.

Looking at it another way, at the end of this fiscal year we will have spent more on USDA food assistance programs in the last three years than we spent on 50 years of farm price support activities up to 1982.

Those emergency farm price support expenditures in the early 1980s were an investment in our future—to get the agricultural economy on a firm base again. And we turned it around. Gross cash income and net cash income reached successive record highs each year from 1987 through 1990. Farm exports increased each of those years, and now are second only to 1981.

We fashioned the 1985 and 1990 farm bills to gave farmers greater opportunities and freedom to plant and manage for a profit. And we did that in the face of those who would have shackled farmers with controls, and would have written off farm exports as the best opportunity for growth. We should stay ever alert and never buy the pessimism of those who think our future lies in a government-regulated farm economy.

In 1982 we didn't have any land in a long-term land retirement system. I didn't find anyone who was predicting that by 1992 we would have more than 36 million acres of highly erodible farmland in the Conservation Reserve Program: This is the most successful program in history built around the idea of good soil and water conservation. I hope nobody overlooks the fact that this is an incentive program where government works with farmers to attain mutually desirable goals.

On the nation's broader horizon, I didn't find anyone forecasting in 1982 that within 10 years the Cold War would be over and the Berlin Wall would fall . . . that Eastern Europe would be free . . . and that the Communist dominated Soviet Union would within the 10 years be embracing market economics. Yet those events happened and have had a tremendous impact on the United States and world agriculture—and what happens in that part of the world over the next few years will heavily affect your life and mine. Perhaps nothing else will matter quite as much.

The United States paid a stiff price in the form of increased federal debt to stop the Cold War and stop aggression through military preparedness and foreign assistance to stem the march of communism. But we changed the world at a very critical time in history and made it safer for us and our children. It takes time, and some turmoil, for the economy to adjust from heavy defense spending to a lower level. But we are well along with that now, and we can adjust to peaceful economic needs and allocate resources to other ends.

In 1982 I didn't find anyone who was foreseeing that we would be embraced in a worldwide search for new and fair rules of international trade in agriculture with negotiations that would consume more than half of the ensuing 10 years—without being totally resolved as we meet here today.

We have been determined during the GATT negotiations that we will not settle for less than major changes in reducing unfair world-wide barriers to

trade. We view unfair trade barriers for what they are: barriers to economic growth and prosperity. Against tremendous pressures to settle for less, we have held our ground. With the breakthrough with the EC two weeks ago on oilseeds and reductions in internal farm supports and external export subsidies, we are now close to releasing a waterfall of new and invigorating economic forces throughout the world.

Of all the things we can do to stimulate the economy, nothing measures up to the potential contribution of trade to fashion a vigorous close of the century. The free flow of fair, unrestricted trade comes at no budget cost; instead, it enhances budget revenues, it makes jobs, it puts money in people's pockets, and it spreads its benefits throughout society.

The elements to do that are in the agreements we reached with the EC two weeks ago. They call for a 20 percent reduction in trade-distorting internal farm supports from a 1986-88 base. This requires no further cuts by the U.S. than those already made. The agreement calls for a 21 percent reduction in the volume of subsidized farm exports and a 36 percent reduction in subsidy outlays from a 1986-90 base. This is equivalent to a 38 percent reduction in EC subsidized wheat exports from 1992 levels. The reduction in oilseeds acreage, with set-asides, and binding arbitration if the agreement is breached, is a real plus for U.S. oilseed producers.

I didn't find an inkling 10 years ago that by now we would have a North American Free Trade Agreement—the most far-reaching trade agreement ever on this continent, one that encompasses the largest total economic activity of any trade group in the world, and holds a much brighter future for Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

These are positive developments for agriculture and the Nation. Let's not let anything deter us in these new ventures, nor take us a step backwards.

In the proceedings of the Outlook Conference of 10 years ago I did not find reference to such words as: Ethanol fuels. Commodity certificates. EEP. Flex acres. Sodbuster. Swampbuster. Alternative agriculture. And Alar.

Nor did I find reference to those terms of endearment that have made my life so pleasant: The spotted owl. BST. The food pyramid. Wetlands regulations. Animal rights. Global warming. And food labeling.

What this review tells us, I think, is that change—inevitable change—often follows courses and leads to events that we, as mere mortals, cannot foretell.

So as we look ahead today at the horizons of change for agriculture, let us be humbled by our experience—yet be bold.

I think that we can identify some winds of change that will blow with persistent and increased intensity in the years ahead.

One enduring force for change is the search for new industrial uses for agricultural products. For these reasons:

—The need to increase the demand for farm products, with resulting improvement in farm income, so that farmers can meet ever-increasing production costs and farm family living costs.

—The need to substitute the use of renewable resources for decreasing supplies of nonrenewable resources.

—The need to develop and harness more environmentally friendly resources in our drive for clean air and clear water and a better environment. New uses is the subject of the new Yearbook of Agriculture, out today and on sale outside the Auditorium.

Another enduring force for change is the search for fair rules of international trade:

—We need to open the way to increase those farm exports where we have a competitive advantage in the world, thus increasing our farm income and boosting national economic activity.

—We need to stimulate world trade in agricultural and industrial commodities to offset the drag of static growth that now slows world economies.

—We need to reduce the costs and the drain on nations and societies of sustaining unfair trade barriers and export subsidies. American farmers should be given a chance to compete with foreign farmers—instead of having to compete with foreign treasuries or against capricious, protective, and wasteful foreign regulations.

Another enduring force for change is the search for innovative and productive agricultural research:

—Research is the well from which we draw water to sustain our economic life and improve our levels of living.

—We must have good research to remain competitive in world agriculture and not be weakened or swept aside or overwhelmed by discoveries elsewhere.

—We need good research to broaden the forms of trade merchandise to reach rapidly increasing population numbers in other lands, both for their benefit and for ours. Agriculture is a people business—and future population growth will be overwhelmingly outside our shores.

Another enduring force for change is the search for sound farm programs based on incentives:

—Government should be a partner with farmers in steering desirable change, not be a policeman or a foreboding oppressor.

—Incentives are superior to, and get more results than, regulations and controls.

—Farmers and society can share the cost and goals of guiding desirable agricultural actions through incentives—while protecting farmers’ private property rights.

Another enduring force for change is the search for better delivery of our USDA services:

—We need to keep our costs as low as practical, and shorten the delivery time of reaching our farm and non-farm families with high-quality USDA services.

—We need to adjust to changes among our constituents so that USDA can better anticipate and understand our clients’ needs.

—We must train our USDA staff and improve the performance of our staff on whom we and our clients depend for outstanding service. But let’s use good sense and good judgment and look at overall synchronized plans and not at isolated cases. Let’s trim fat where we find it—but not sever the muscle. Different is not better. Better is better.

Another enduring force for change is the search for policies that reflect the wishes and best interests of our USDA client groups:

—A functional government must be responsive to the people in its society.

—A lively organization must be adjustable and thrive on change.

—An effective democracy must furnish the avenue of change, provide a reasoned forum for the discussion and resolution of competing viewpoints and policies, and maintain a stable environment for engaging the gears of change. But let’s be aware of self-appointed experts with narrow views whose desire to use dramatic means to bring attention to themselves in the public arena is stronger than their desire to make measured progress for all. Let’s be better prepared in agriculture to speak with a unified voice—based on sound science and sound economics—and be quick to respond in the public arena if necessary.

Another exciting force for change is the developing realm of biotechnology. The coming biotechnology age in agriculture promises to make faster and more far-reaching progress that will dwarf the advances of the preceding age of agricultural mechanization and the chemical age:

—Biotechnology is more environmentally friendly and is our best chance to harness pest and disease resistance, reduce the use of chemicals and fertilizers, and enhance food safety.

—Biotechnology will speed our advancements in quality and content of crops and livestock and leapfrog over the narrow boundaries and snail’s pace of crossbreeding and natural selection which have prevailed for the last 10,000 years.

—We can stretch our seasons, now delineated by frost; we can cope better with drought and heat and salinity; and we can competitively serve a world-wide market with a cornucopia of treasures that since the beginning of time have been hidden among the gene messengers nestled in the chromosomes of nature. We must not let fear mongers deter us from unveiling these benefits.

It is a great time to be alive and to be active in agriculture.

Our goals should be fair food and fiber prices and improved incomes that will allow farm families to maintain their ability to maintain our natural resources . . . be competitive . . . invest in modern equipment . . . pay for modern practices . . . and enjoy healthy, happy, and productive lives as members of a rural community economic and social life with good schools, good health care, and good living.

Our goal also should be to provide healthful, safe, and nutritious food, and plentiful high-quality fiber for consumers in adequate amounts, and serve those who are disengaged from the mainstream of economic life and who need our compassion and our aid.

Overall, I would like to suggest that whatever changes come, the United States Department of Agriculture will serve with distinction and with pride.

Abraham Lincoln called it the “people’s department.” That is how the Department of Agriculture was born. That is the way it has lived. The partnership between USDA and its clients is unequalled in Government. That is why I believe the USDA will serve us well through the changes it anticipates in the coming years, as well as those changes it does not foresee, but nevertheless encounters and copes with along the way.

Never has a government department done more for the people of a nation through war and peace . . . through prosperity and adversity . . . through ferment and through tranquility . . . and through Democrat and Republican leadership.

This is the last time that I will speak to you at your Outlook Conference. As I leave, I would like to congratulate the people in this Department of Agriculture for your professionalism . . . your ingenuity . . . your dedication . . . your loyalty . . . your responsiveness to the people of the United States . . . and for standing tall in carrying out your responsibilities of government in a democratic society.

To you who are the patrons of this Department, let me say that the forces that have helped make this Department great are, in major measure, attributable to your advice . . . your guidance . . . your insistence . . . and your respect for this Department.

Together we have demonstrated our love and genuine concern for the land . . . for our natural resources . . . for the farm families who each year

transform the soil and the sun into life-giving food and fiber . . . and for the consumers, especially the less fortunate, whom we serve.

This Outlook Conference is one avenue for us to share our information and insights with you; and for you, equally, to give us your advice and your help. Let us get on with that challenge and that opportunity so that what we do here will help make this a greater United States of America.

Thank you and God bless you.

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# Statement—

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U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

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**Prepared for delivery by Secretary of Agriculture, Edward Madigan, on Food Labels, December 2, 1992**

I am satisfied with President Bush's decision on the food label format. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will now work with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to get the labels done quickly. We will implement the rule as soon as possible, and our lawyers are working on it now. We can now look forward to uniform food labels that include the meat and poultry products regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Contacts: Doug Adair or Roger Runningen, (202) 720-4623

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# News Releases

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

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## USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE AND USER MARKETING CERTIFICATE PAYMENT RATE FOR UPLAND COTTON

Washington, Nov. 27—Keith Bjerke, executive vice president of USDA’s Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment (CCA) in effect immediately through 3:59 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 3. The user marketing certificate payment rate announced today is in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, Nov. 27, through midnight Thursday, Dec. 3.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the AWP may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (USNE price) exceeds the Northern Europe (NE) price. The maximum allowable adjustment is the difference between the USNE price and the NE price.

A further adjustment to this week’s calculated AWP may be made in accordance with this provision. The calculated AWP is 75 percent of the 1992 upland cotton base quality loan rate, and the USNE price exceeds the NE price by 4.95 cents per pound. Following are the relevant calculations:

I.	Calculated AWP .....	39.47 cents per pound
	1992 Base Loan Rate .....	52.35 cents per pound
	AWP as a Percent of Loan Rate .....	75
II.	USNE Price .....	58.10 cents per pound
	NE Price .....	-53.15 cents per pound
	Maximum Adjustment Allowed .....	4.95 cents per pound

Based on a consideration of the U.S. share of world exports, the current level of cotton export sales and cotton export shipments, and other relevant

data, no further adjustment to this week’s calculated AWP will be made.

This week’s AWP and coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price	
NE Price .....	53.15
Adjustments:	
Average U.S. spot market location .....	11.82
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton .....	1.55
Average U.S. location .....	0.31
Sum of Adjustments .....	-13.68
Calculated AWP .....	39.47
Further AWP Adjustment .....	- 0
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE .....	39.47 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment	
NE Price .....	53.15
NE Coarse Count Price .....	-49.02
	4.13
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton .....	-3.95
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT .....	0.18 cents/lb.

Because the AWP is below the 1991 and 1992 base quality loan rates of 50.77 and 52.35 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rate during this period is equal to the AWP, adjusted for the specific quality and location plus applicable interest and storage charges. The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

Because the AWP is below the 1992-crop loan rate, cash loan deficiency payments will be paid to eligible producers who agree to forgo obtaining a price support loan with respect to the 1992 crop. The payment rate is equal to the difference between the loan rate and the AWP. Producers are allowed to obtain a loan deficiency payment on a bale-by-bale basis.

The USNE price has exceeded the NE price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks and the AWP has not exceeded 130 percent of the 1992 crop year base quality loan rate in any week of the 4-week period. As a result, the user marketing certificate payment rate is 3.70 cents per pound. This rate is applicable for bales opened by domestic users and for cotton contracts entered into by exporters for delivery prior to September 30, 1993. Relevant data used in determining the user marketing certificate payment rate are summarized below:

Week	For the Friday through Thursday Period	USNE Current Price	NE Current Price	USNE Minus NE	Certificate Payment Rate 1/
1	Nov. 5, 1992	56.65	52.11	4.54	3.29
2	Nov. 12, 1992	58.85	52.78	6.07	4.82
3	Nov. 19, 1992	58.30	52.69	5.61	4.36
4	Nov. 26, 1992	58.10	53.15	4.95	3.70

1/ USNE price minus NE price minus 1.25 cents.

Next week's AWP, CCA and user marketing certificate payment rate will be announced on Thursday, Dec. 3.

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## DUST STORMS FORM IN 10-INCH ZONE ABOVE THE GROUND

WASHINGTON, Nov. 27—Windblown grains of dust that circle the globe often get their start when larger, bouncing soil particles hammer them aloft in a zone 10 inches off the ground, a U.S. Department of Agriculture researcher has found.

USDA's Donald W. Fryrear said the "unexpected discovery" came while analyzing 18,000 thimblefuls of windblown soil collected in various states over the past seven years, using a dust sampler he invented. If the wind is strong enough, he found, grain-sized soil particles bounce up and down within the 10-inch zone.

"These larger particles are the sledgehammers that make dust storms happen," said Fryrear, an engineer with USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Big Spring, Texas. "Each time they strike the ground they dislodge particles a thousand times smaller."

As the larger particles kick finer particles into the air to form dust clouds, he said, "the cycle repeats, building on itself over and over again. Eventually, you have a full-fledged dust storm."

Smaller particles may be blown back to earth and then whisked skyward again, he said. Once they stay aloft above the 10-inch zone, the particles may fly a few feet or encircle the globe, Fryrear said. He has been on the trail of dust storms for 35 years.

He said farmers in the Great Plains—site of the Dust Bowl in the 1930s—face the potential “for a severe season of dust storms this fall. What bothers me is that we already have had a very early dust storm. Our usual season is November to May, but this one struck west Texas in October. That indicates the soil is ready to blow when the wind picks up.”

Fryrear now has dust samplers at each of 16 sites located in Texas and Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New York, Oklahoma and Canada.

He said this December he will place samplers on farmland in California’s San Joaquin Valley. That’s where dust blew across Interstate 5 last December and caused a multiple-fatality traffic pileup.

“If we had been tracking soil surface conditions in California last year, we might have anticipated the blinding dust storm that suddenly hit Interstate 5,” he said. “Maybe the highway could have been shut down for a time.”

Fryrear said dust storms can be predicted by using an equation he developed to analyze windblown soil. Samples are collected from ground zero up to 40 inches in the air.

At the 40-inch height, he found that soil particles are a thousand times smaller than those along the surface. But he said his research revealed that the most telling shifts in particle size happen in the first 10 inches—lower than previously believed. “Our seven years of data support the finding.”

An alert system could be put in place where farmlands or regions of the country are prone to dust storms, he said. Samplers would be used to monitor the changes in windblown soil. A significant increase in the number and size of particles would be a warning that farmers should expect a dust storm, he said.

NOTE TO EDITORS: For details, contact Donald W. Fryrear, agricultural engineer, Conservation and Production Research, USDA, ARS, Big Spring, Texas 79721. Telephone: (915) 263-0293. A black and white glossy photograph (92BW1872) is available on request from the Photography Division, OPA, USDA, Room 4404S, Washington, DC 20250. Telephone: (202) 720-6633.

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## **MEDIA ADVISORY:**

### **YEARBOOK VIDEO FOOTAGE**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 27—Video footage is available to broadcasters on certain subject areas covered in the 1992 Yearbook of Agriculture, “New Crops, New Uses, New Markets,” which will be released Dec. 1.

Broadcasters interested in obtaining the footage should contact the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Office of Publishing and Visual Communication, Office of Public Affairs, Room 402-A, Washington, D.C. 20250, telephone (202) 720-8005 or 720-2592.

Media review copies of the book itself are available from USDA’s News Division, OPA, Room 404-A, telephone (202) 720-4026.

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### **USDA TO ALLOW IMPORTATION OF CHILEAN CHERIMOYAS**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 27—Starting Nov. 30, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will allow the importation of cherimoyas, a relative of the sugar apple, from certain areas in Chile.

“We believe the fruit can safely enter the United States from specific Chilean provinces that are free of the Mediterranean fruit fly,” said B. Glen Lee, deputy administrator for plant protection and quarantine with USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Lee said the fruit must be treated with methyl bromide or soapy water and wax as a precaution against introducing the Chile false red mite into the United States.

Inspections by APHIS officials will prevent the entry of other dangerous pests, Lee said. Unlike the Medfly or the red mite, all other pests carried by cherimoyas from Chile can be detected visually.

Chilean cherimoya imports had previously been banned because of the pest risk.

In the United States, cherimoyas are grown primarily in California from mid-November through May or June.

This final rule is scheduled for publication in the Nov. 30 Federal Register.

For more information on fruit import regulations, contact Peter M. Grosser, senior operations officer, port operations, plant protection and quarantine, at (301) 436-6799.

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## **USDA EXTENDS COMMENT PERIOD ON AVOCADO IMPORT PROPOSAL**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 27—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is extending the comment period until Dec. 18 for a proposal to allow commercially grown Haas variety avocados from the Mexican state of Michoacan to enter the state of Alaska.

“The extension will provide all interested persons additional time to prepare comments,” said B. Glen Lee, deputy administrator for plant protection and quarantine with USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Current USDA regulations prohibit the entry of Mexican avocados because of specific agricultural pests, including certain fruit flies and seed pests.

The proposed rule would allow shipments from growers enrolled in Mexico’s avocado export program. Participants’ avocados are inspected, packed and shipped in accordance with procedures the Mexican government has designed to minimize the risk of exporting pest-infested fruit.

The avocados would be allowed entry only at certain U.S. ports and would be subject to strict transit restrictions. Boxes would be marked for distribution in Alaska only.

Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before Dec. 18. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket 92-111-1 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Comments may be inspected at USDA, Room 1141-S, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

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## **CAPITOL TREE TO ARRIVE NOVEMBER 30**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 27—A 62-foot tall white spruce raised in the Northwoods of Minnesota will arrive by truck in the nation's capital on Monday, Nov. 30, to serve as the 1992 Capitol Tree, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today.

“Until a week ago, the 44-year old conifer, now also known as the Peoples’ Tree, was growing in the Chippewa National Forest near Grand Rapids, Minn.,” said Lamar Beasley, deputy chief for administration with USDA’s Forest Service.

Every year since 1970, the Forest Service has provided a tree to the U.S. Capitol to celebrate the holiday season. “This year the Chippewa National Forest, 11 communities in the area and the Leech lake Indian Reservation formed a partnership using private donations to bring the tree to the Capital,” Beasley said.

Over 250 people from northern Minnesota will follow the tree to the Capital, including 150 children from the Bug-O-Gay-She-Nig tribal school in Cass Lake. The participation of the Indian reservation heightens awareness of 1992 as the Year of the American Indian, Beasley said.

Capitol Landscape Architect Paul Pincus selected the tree on a visit to Minnesota this spring. After its arrival on Monday, Pincus’ crew will add 4,000 lights and thousands of ornaments made by Minnesota schoolchildren and adults.

Speaker of the House Tom Foley (D.-Wash) will conduct a short ceremony on Wednesday, Dec. 9, at 5 p.m. on the Capitol lawn and light the tree after sunset. The tree lighting is open to the public. The tree will be lit each evening throughout the holiday season.

NOTE TO EDITORS: The lighting ceremony of the Capitol Tree is sometimes confused with the similar celebration for the National Tree on the White House lawn. The latter ceremony will take place Dec. 10.

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## **TO RUSSIA THEY GO: AMERICANS TO ST. PETERSBURG MODEL FARM**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the American Farm Bureau have selected two American farm families to work in the St. Petersburg Model Farm Community in Russia.

Charles and Lyndell Edgemon from Lubbock, Texas, and Lelyn and Julia Stadnyk from Ashland, Wisconsin, were chosen from among 80 applicants in a nationwide search announced Aug. 26 (USDA News Release No. 0796-92).

“We’re very pleased the Edgemons and the Stadnyks have agreed to participate in this model farm project,” said Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan.

“Both couples possess the qualifications we were looking for—a broadbased technical expertise in production agriculture and excellent communication skills,” Madigan said.

“The project is designed to assist Russian farmers in their transition to a privately owned and operated agricultural system,” explained Mitchell Geasler, associate administrator of USDA’s Extension Service.

For two years, the Edgemons and the Stadnyks will live in the Russian model farm community, and work alongside the Russian farm families. They will serve as on-site advisors to the 21 Russian farmers participating in the project.

“We’re looking forward to the task of helping our Russian counterparts achieve their production and marketing goals,” said Judy Stadnyk.

“It’s going to be a challenge, but we feel we can do it,” agreed Charles Edgemon. The Edgemons were Peace Corps Volunteers in Tonga, and worked for Volunteers Overseas in Cooperative Agriculture.

Charles brings to the project a wide range of experiences with agricultural cooperatives, in business management, marketing and appropriate technology. Lyndell has experience in organizational management, with an emphasis on communication and instruction.

Lee and Judy Stadnyk are experienced dairy farmers. Lee, who has a Ph.D. in zoology from Montana State University, speaks Russian, and is a part-time instructor at Northland College, in Wisconsin. Judy adds to the team an expertise in food processing, marketing and farm management.

Both couples participated in a USDA sponsored orientation on cross-cultural expectations, the St. Petersburg agricultural environment, project goals and other project related topics.

The Stadnyks and the Edgemons depart for Russia November 28.

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## **NEW GERMPLASM LINE OFFERS RESISTANCE TO RACE 2 SOYBEAN CYST NEMATODES**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 30—Soybeans have been given a new defense against a soil-borne worm that can lower yields 20 to 50 percent, said a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist.

Lawrence D. Young, a plant pathologist, said a new soybean breeding line resists Race 2 soybean cyst nematodes. Race 2 nematodes primarily infest soybean fields in Virginia and North Carolina but traces of the pest have appeared in Maryland and Tennessee, he said.

J87-233, the new soybean line, also shows good resistance to soybean cyst nematode Races 1, 3 and 5, and is fairly resistant to Race 14 cyst nematodes and root-knot nematodes, Young said. These nematode races—designated as such based on the types of soybeans they attack—can be found throughout many eastern states where the crop is grown.

Nematodes are present in almost all of this country's 26 soybean-producing states, he said. Hidden in the soil, the pest invades the roots and then disrupts the flow of water and nutrients in plants so their yields fall off. Roots of infested plants are also vulnerable to rotting by fungi.

"J87-233 has good productivity, but the yield is not competitive with the best cultivars," Young said. "Our idea was to release the line so commercial breeders could cross it with their productive lines and provide nematode resistance."

Young developed the new line at the ARS Nematology Research unit in Jackson, Tenn. In tests, he counted the number of cysts—or female nematodes—infesting potted J87-233 plants. Of about 1,500 nematode eggs per race applied to the plants, he found only eight, nine and zero cysts for three populations of Race 2 cyst nematodes. An average of 390 cysts infested susceptible soybean cultivars, he said.

Because cyst nematodes eventually respond to resistant cultivars by evolving another race, Young said it is necessary to continually develop new

cultivars. Rotating soybeans with other crops can help extend a cultivar's resistant lifetime, he said.

"Planting resistant varieties is probably the main control method," said Young. "But we would prefer that growers use crop rotation as long as it is economically practical."

Samples of 50 seeds of J87-233 are available upon request, Young said. "I've gotten about 15 requests for seed so far—that's about 25 percent of the soybean plant breeders in the U.S."

J87-233 is a cross between a standard variety called Bedford and two other germplasm lines, and reaches maturity seven days earlier than Bedford.

NOTE TO EDITORS: For details, contact Lawrence D. Young, plant pathologist, Nematology Research, USDA, ARS, Jackson, Tenn. 38301. Telephone: (901) 425-4741

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## **MEDIA ADVISORY:**

### **NEW WORLD TREASURES**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 30—An award winning video documentary which traces the influence of three New World treasures—corn, potatoes and chile peppers—on past, present and future generations will be presented Dec. 4, beginning at 12 noon at the National Museum of Natural History, Baird Auditorium, Constitution Ave. at 10th Street, N.W.

After the presentation, Dr. Duane Acker, assistant secretary of agriculture for science and education, will chair a roundtable discussion with experts on future food resources.

The 30-minute documentary, "Green Gold: From the Maya to the Moon," was produced by New Mexico State University and Purdue University in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research Service.

For more information call (202) 357-2700.

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## NEW HYBRID ELM TREES RESIST DUTCH ELM DISEASE

WASHINGTON, Dec. 1—New elm trees developed from Asian and European species resist the Dutch elm disease fungus, a leading killer of native American elms, two U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists report.

“We screened seedlings and then young trees for several years and now have two new selections that survive the fungus,” said plant geneticist Alden M. Townsend of USDA’s Agricultural Research Service. He is research leader at the agency’s U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, D.C.

Townsend said the new trees, named Frontier and Prospector, owe their Dutch elm resistance to species growing in China and Japan. “Strains of the fungus have been around there longer and native elms have had time to develop resistance,” he said.

Townsend said cuttings of the two hybrids were supplied to several wholesale nurseries in 1990 and young trees may be ready for the commercial retail market in 1994. They grow 35 to 45 feet high.

*Ophiostoma ulmi*—the fungus that causes Dutch elm disease—has hindered widespread plantings of American elm trees, said Lawrence R. Schreiber, a plant pathologist at the arboretum’s research site in Delaware, Ohio, where the new elms were bred and planted.

“American elms were probably the main urban tree,” Schreiber said. “They were planted everywhere until the early 1940s when Dutch elm disease got out of hand.” Log shipments en route to Cleveland, Ohio, from France accidentally carried the fungus into the country.

Schreiber said European species were test-planted in Ohio and other midwest states 25 to 30 years ago in a search for a resistant elm, but most of them adapted poorly to this country’s colder climate. As a result, research at the lab focused on developing hybrid elms from selections of coldhardy Asian species plus a few species of European elm that withstood cold temperatures.

Prospector originated from selected seedlings of *Ulmus wilsoniana*, a Japanese elm first planted at the lab in 1965. Frontier was developed by crossing the Chinese lacebark elm, *U. parvifolia*, with a European species, *U. carpinifolia*, in 1971, Townsend said. He and Schreiber also worked with ARS horticulturist Susan E. Bentz and technician Warren O. Masters of the arboretum staff.

About 10 years of research went into developing and evaluating Dutch elm resistance in Prospector and Frontier, Townsend said. But the Ohio lab is now using a tissue culture technique that may shorten that time by as much as five years, he said.

At the lab, Schreiber, Masters and plant physiologist Subhash Domir are growing callus tissue taken from leaves of resistant elms. Callus—the orange, oatmeal-like material from leaf tissue—is grown in petri dishes and then subjected to the fungus.

If the scientists confirm that callus can be screened reliably for disease resistance, they can bypass the time and care now spent in growing generations of seedlings to see if they resist disease, Schreiber said.

Once the trees are commercially available, their quick growth and adaptability to stressful environments may appeal to landscapers, home owners and park personnel in urban areas, Schreiber said.

“Trees planted on city streets take a lot of abuse. Landscape trees like maple, ash and oak trees aren’t nearly as adaptable as the elm to withstanding adverse environmental conditions,” Schreiber said.

Frontier and Prospector’s 35 to 45 foot height should make them ideal for planting along city streets, in highway medians, near power-lines or other sites with space limitations, Schreiber said.

During the autumn months, the pyramid-shaped crown of Frontier will turn a deep maroon while Prospector’s vase-shaped crown turns yellow. Prospector elm will flower in the springtime but Frontier usually won’t flower at all, he said.

Although the two trees were developed mainly for Dutch elm resistance, they also showed resistance to elm yellows disease and the elm leaf beetle during cooperative studies with Richard Hall of Ohio State University, Townsend said.

“Prospector proved unique because it was completely resistant to the elm leaf beetle,” Townsend said. “Frontier was moderately resistant.” The beetle is a serious pest which chews on tree leaves, he said.

NOTE TO EDITORS: For details, contact Lawrence R. Schreiber, plant pathologist, USDA, ARS, Delaware, Ohio 43015, telephone: (614) 363-1129, or Alden M. Townsend, plant geneticist, U.S. National Arboretum, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20002, telephone: (202) 475-4848.

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## **MEDIA ADVISORY:**

### **FGIS ANNUAL REPORT RELEASED TO CONGRESS**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 1—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service today released its 1992 Annual Report to Congress. The report summarizes the agency's key programs and accomplishments during fiscal 1992.

Specific FGIS activities covered include: inspection and weighing, research and development, standards and procedures, compliance, and international relations. Also included is grain dust explosion information and "Outlook 1993," a prospective view of the challenges facing the agency in the upcoming year.

The FGIS annual report is delivered to the chairmen of the House Committee on Agriculture and the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry by the first day of December each year.

The report is available, in limited quantities, to the public.

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### **USDA ANNOUNCES 1993 RICE PROGRAM PROVISIONS**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 1—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced a preliminary acreage reduction requirement of zero percent for the 1993 crop of rice.

Other acreage reduction program provisions are:

— The national average loan and purchase rate will be \$6.50 per hundredweight, the same as the 1992 rate. Rates for milled kernels will be announced prior to the 1993 program signup period which begins March 1.

— The established target price will be \$10.71 per hundredweight, unchanged from the 1992 target price.

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## **USDA ANNOUNCES 1993 ELS COTTON LOAN RATE AND ACREAGE REDUCTION PROGRAM**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 1—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced the 1993 price support loan rate for extra long staple (ELS) cotton will be 88.12 cents per pound and the acreage reduction percentage will be 20 percent.

The 1993 ELS cotton price support loan rate must be announced no later than Dec. 1. The 1993 loan rate is equal to 85 percent of the average price received by ELS producers during three years of the five-year period ending July 31, 1992, excluding the highest and lowest years. The established target price, which equals 120 percent of the loan rate, will be \$1.057 per pound.

The 1949 act authorizes the establishment of a limitation on the acreage planted to ELS cotton if it is determined that the total supply will be excessive. In making the limitation determination, sufficient carryover must be ensured to maintain reasonable and stable prices and to meet a national emergency.

Other details of the 1993 ELS cotton program will be announced later.

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## **CCC INTEREST RATE FOR DECEMBER 3-5/8 PERCENT**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 1—Commodity loans disbursed in December by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation will carry a 3-5/8 percent interest rate, according to Keith Bjerke, executive vice president of the CCC.

The 3-5/8 percent interest rate is up from November's 3-1/8 percent and reflects the interest rate charged CCC by the U.S. Treasury in December.

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## **FGIS CHANGES REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR CORN AND SORGHUM INSPECTIONS**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 1—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service no longer will require the reporting of information on the individual components broken corn (BC), broken kernels (BN), and foreign material (FM) on official grade certificates for non-export corn and sorghum inspections.

According to FGIS Administrator John C. Foltz, the decision to eliminate this reporting requirement was based in part on the results of a study conducted by the University of Illinois and Iowa State University. The studies indicated, Foltz said, that the market does not use the information to merchandise grain.

Foltz said, however, that BC, BN, and FM individual component information would continue to be available upon request.

This change will become effective Dec. 31.

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## **USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 1—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Randall Green today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 8.73 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 7.80 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 7.78 cents per pound;
- broken kernels, 4.37 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, loan deficiency payment rates and gains from repaying price support loans at the world market price level are:

- for long grain, \$1.25 per hundredweight;
- for medium grain, \$1.22 per hundredweight;
- for short grain, \$1.22 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3 p.m. EST. The next scheduled price announcement will be made Dec. 8 at 3 p.m. EST.

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Issued: Dec. 2, 1992

## **U.S. FOREST SERVICE JOINS BATTLE TO SAVE KENYA'S TREES**

WASHINGTON—Kenyans stand to lose about \$8 billion in timber products if they cannot soon find a way to stop the voracious cypress aphid, according to a leading Kenyan forestry official.

J.O. Gor, chief of Kenya's Industrial Forestry Division, estimates the threat of the destructive pest extends to some 86,000 hectares of cypress and cedar trees in the government's industrial plantations, as well as 30,000 hectares of cypress woodlots, shade trees and hedges on farms and towns throughout the country. (A hectare equals 2.47 acres.)

An expert with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service says the cypress aphids have severely damaged 50 percent of Kenya's mature cypress stands since 1990.

"The aphids threaten an important industry as well as a way of life," said Dennis Souto, a Forest Service entomologist who returned from Kenya last spring.

Over 300 licensed sawmills and four plywood mills in Kenya supply roundwood each year for building-wood products, fuelwood, charcoal and pulp and paper. Kenya's trees are vital to the country's conservation strategies for soil and water. Over 35,000 people are employed in Kenya's forestry sector, and 1.5 percent of the country's gross domestic product is from forest products.

In addition to an economic impact, Kenyans will feel the loss personally. "They surround their homes and buildings with hedges for privacy, protectin them from animal and human intruders," Suoto said.

Kenyans use wood so extensively for fuel in rural areas—where most of the population lives—that there is a steady drain on supplies. That's why Kenya's government has long encouraged its farmers to establish their own woodlots for poles and firewood.

—Slower than Wildfires, but Every Bit as Bad—

Cypress aphids, *Cinara cupressi*, native to Europe and North America, first found their way to Malawi in 1986. Since then, they have been feeding on twigs and branches of trees and hedges in Kenya and seven other African countries.

Outside their natural habitat, with no natural predators and a climate that encourages quick breeding, cypress aphids have devastated parts of the African landscape, covering the lush and healthy green with sickly red splotches.

According to Dan Kucera, the Forest Service entomologist spearheading a U.S. effort to help rid Kenya of the pests, cypress aphids give birth to live young and grow to be adults in 6 days. One aphid and its succeeding generations, Kucera says, can lay enough eggs to infest all of Africa.

Kenya's forested lands include 300,000 hectares of native juniper and 85,000 hectares of imported Mexican cypress. The tall, fast growing Mexican cypress, *Cupressus lusitanica*, is originally from Mexico and the high mountains of Guatemala.

Imported many years ago, the trees now cover the rolling countryside— as living fences and hedges, for fuelwood and windbreaks, and as 45 percent of the country's extensive forest plantations.

Mexican cypress and native juniper are both susceptible to the aphids' destruction.

—U.S. Forest Service Joins the Effort—

Denny Ward, a Forest Service entomologist from Ashville, S.C., surveyed and monitored cypress aphids and trained Kenyans in aerial surveys. He is returning again to Kenya this month for a 2-year assignment.

Dennis Souto, Forest Service entomologist from Durham, N.H., helped Kenyans explore a variety of ways to manage the aphids last spring. In addition to the efforts of Ward and Souto, the Forest Service is searching for natural enemies to control the aphid.

"Spraying the trees with pesticides really isn't a viable alternative," Dan Kucera explained. "The cypress trees are very dense, and so the spray doesn't get to the bark. We have had good luck using biological controls on pine, and feel confident that we would have a good chance finding a parasite to kill the cypress aphid."

Under Kucera's direction, Forest Service staff members are searching U.S. forests for cypress aphids that are mumified or discolored, signalling the presence of parasites in the aphid's body.

An initial search in 1991 successfully turned up nine aphid bodies infested with parasites, giving hope that more will be found. The potential hero, or heroine in this case, was a female wasp-like parasite which injects her stinger

inside the aphid and lays eggs. The eggs hatch inside the aphid and eventually kill it, stopping its destruction.

Over the next 4 years, Forest Service entomologists will continue to work through the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization and the London-based International Institute of Biological Control (IIBC). Funding is provided by the Forest Service's Tropical Forestry Program.

Forest Service staff will search forests for infested cypress aphids and their parasites and send them off to London, where the IIBC will rear the parasites, test them on aphids, then send them to Kenya and Malawi, where they will be released to control the aphids and help save the trees from further destruction.

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